

Mountain Gorilla Safari: Gorillas, Chimps, and a Big Game Safari (Uganda).

10 days from \$6,995,

**Wilderness Travel, wilderness travel.com,
800-368-2794**

Imagine a 450 pound silverback gorilla passing so close in front of you that you could trip him if you were crazy enough to stick your foot out! That was our experience (my wife and I) after trekking for 40 minutes up a muddy jungle trail, then crawling through the brush for several minutes.

In Uganda, you hike in groups of 8, not including trackers and porters carrying your daypack, to visit one of the three gorilla groups that have been acclimated to human contact. You have one hour to stand around and watch the dozen or so gorillas which includes the boss silverback, maybe another silverback, a couple of younger mature males (called black backs because the fur on their backs has not yet turned gray) females and children of various ages.

You are supposed to stay about 20 feet away but if they approach you, it's OK. For obvious reasons, you do not turn around and run!!!! At one point, I just put my camera down (I have over 100 photos from the two days we visited the gorillas) and watched them go about their daily business which for the adults was mostly eating (bamboo shoots not tourists) and for the kids was mostly playing, swinging from the vines and falling all over each other. To be in the presence of such amazing creatures was mind blowing!

For more information read the chapter written by my wife, Katherine, "*Tracking Mountain Gorillas in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest*" in *Riding the Hulahula to the Arctic Ocean* (National Geographic, 2008).



Mountain Gorilla Safari

10 days | from: \$6995

- Enjoy thrilling encounters with mountain gorillas in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park
- Track chimpanzees on the trails of Kibale Forest National Park
- Phenomenal big game safari in Queen Elizabeth National Park in the Great Rift Valley
- Comfortable forest lodges with superb access to the wildlife



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